

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SANTIAGO 12231

EO 11652: XGDS1
TAGS: CASC, SHUM, CI
SUBJ: RAFAEL GONZALEZ VERDUGO

REF: SANTIAGO 12114

1. SUMMARY: ON THE BASIS OF THE ITALIAN EMBASSY'S BELIEF THAT THERE MIGHT BE SOME GIVE IN THE GOC POSITION ON RAFAEL GONZALEZ, EMBOFFS SPOKE TO A SENIOR FONMINISTRY OFFICIAL. THE REPLY WAS A REAFFIRMATION THAT GONZALEZ WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO LEAVE CHILE. END SUMMARY.

2. EMBOFF DEC. 28 MET WITH ITALIAN CHARGE DE VERGOTTINI, ICEM REP KOZAK, AND ICRC REP JENNY (APRA TWO, REFTEL)M DE VERGOTTINI SAID THAT MRS. GONZALEZ' DEPARTURE AND RETURN TO THE ITALIAN EMBASSY DEC. 26 HAVE SOMEWHAT HEARTENED HER HUSBAND. WHEN DE VERGOTTINI TALKED DEC. 24 TO FONMINISTRY DIRECTOR GENERAL JAIME LAVIN, THE LATTER SIAD NEITHER GONZALEZ NOR HIS WIFE NEEDED A SAFE CONDUCT PASS TO LEAVE THE ITALIAN EMBASSY AND MOVE FREELY IN CHILE. THIS COMPLEMENTED THE POSITION TAKEN BY FONMINISTRY NOTES OF MAY 19 AND JUNE 16, 1976, TO THE ITALIANS--I.E., IF THE FAMILY WANTS TO TRAVEL ABROAD, IT MUST, LIKE ALL CHILEANS, GO THROUGH THE NORMAL PROCEDURES TO OBTAIN PASSPORTS (THE SAME POSITION TAKEN WITH THE EMBASSY ON THE PROPOSED DEPARTURE OF GONZALEZ' WIFE AND SON-- PARA FOUR, SANTIAGO 6870). MOREOVER, THE ITALIAN EMBASSY
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HAD A LETTER OF MARCH 3 FROM THE INTERIOR MINISTRY UNDER SECRETARY TO GONZALEZ' MOTHER STATING THE SAME THING, WITH THE ADITIONAL SIGNIFICANT PHRASE THAT THERE WERE NO IMPEDIMENTS IN THE MINISTRY TO PASSPORT ISSUANCE. (EMBASSY POUCHING COPIES OF THESE DOCUMENTS TO ARA/AND/CH. THEY WERE PASSED IN CONFIDENCE AND HAVE BEEN CLASSIFIED.) DE

VERGOTTINI THOUGHT GONZALEZ MIGHT BE MORE INCLINED NOW TO TRY FOR PASSPORTS WITHOUT INSISTING ON PRIOR GOC ISSUANCE OF SAFE CONDUCTS.

3. JENNY SAID HE HAD SEEN DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE (DINA) COL. CONTRERAS DEC. 17. CONTRERAS TOLD HIM THE USUAL STORIES ABOUT GONZALEZ' MENTAL INSTABILITY. HE ADDED THAT DINA HAD NO INTEREST IN HIM, BUT THAT "FOR THE MOMENT" THE AIR FORCE DID.

4. BASED ON THIS INFORMATION, DE VERGOTTINI SUGGESTED THAT HE SEND AN OFFICIAL LETTER TO ICEM ASKING ITS INTERCESSION WITH THE FONMINISTRY TO FACILITATE THE GRANTING OF TRAVEL DOCUMENTS TO THE FAMILY AND THEIR DEPARTURE. THE US EMBASSY WOULD WRITE ICEM STATING THAT THE FAMILY MAY ENTER THE US. ICEM WOULD THEN WRITE THE MINISTRY, REFERRING TO THE TWO LETTERS, AND REQUESTING COOPERATION.

5. EMBOFF NOTED THE INTRANSIGENT POSITION OF THE FONMINISTRY ON GONZALEZ' DEPARTURE EXPRESSED TO THE USG AND SAID HE WOULD SEE LAVIN THE NEXT DAY. IT WAS AGREED TO AWAIT THAT MEETING BEFORE MOVING ON DE VERGOTTINI'S PROPOSAL.

6. AT LUCH WITH LAVIN DEC. 29, EMBOFFS REFERRED TO LAVIN'S ASSURANCE TO DE VERGOTTINI THAT THE ENTIRE FAMILY COULD LEAVE THE ITALIAN EMBASSY FREELY, AND ASKED WHETHER THERE HAD BEEN ANY CHANGE IN THE GOC POSITION. LAVIN SAID THAT GONZALEZ INDEED COULD LEAVE THE ITALIAN EMBASSY FREELY, SINCE THERE WAS NO CHARGE AGAINST HIM. BUT THE GOC WOULD NOT PERMIT HIM TO LEAVE CHILE FOR RESETTLEMENT ABROAD, SINCE
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HE WOULD SPREAD LIES TO DISCREDIT IT. LAVIN ADDED THAT GONZALEZ ACTUALLY WOULD BE SMART NOT TO GO ABROAD, SINCE HE WOULD BE A PERFECT TARGET FOR ASSASSINATION BY LEFTISTS INTERESTED IN DISCREDITING THE GOC.

7. PICKING UP THE THEME THAT GONZALEZ WAS FREE TO MOVE WITHIN CHILE, EMBOFFS REMINDED LAVIN THAT IN JULY FONMINISTRY UNDER SECRETARY VALDES HAD SAID GONZALEZ WAS BEING INVESTIGATED FOR POSSIBLE DEFAMATION OF CHARACTER (SANTIAGO 6870). DID LAVIN'S STATEMENT TO DE VERGOTTINI MEAN GONZALEZ WAS UNDER NO CHARGE AND WOULD NOT BE PICKED UP SHOULD HE VOLUNTARILY LEAVE THE ITALIAN EMBASSY? LAVIN HEDGED, AND WE CONCLUDE THAT GONZALEZ' FREEDOM COULD NOT BE GUARANTEED SHOULD HE LEAVE ITALIAN JURISDICTION.

8. ITALIAN CHARGE AND ICRC AND ICEM REPS WERE INFORMED OF THE LAVIN CONVERSATION, AND AGREED IT WOULD BE USELESS

TO PROCEED WITH THE EXCHANGE OF LETTERS.

9. COMMENT: THE EMBASSY WAS NOT OPTIMISTIC ABOUT A CHANGE IN THE GOC'S ADAMANT REFUSAL TO ALLOW GONZALEZ' DEPARTURE (EXPRESSED AS RECENTLY AS JULY 28--SANTIAGO 7386), BUT THOUGHT IT WORTH QUERYING LAVIN. WE SEE NO HOPE FROM HIS REPLY.

10. THE EMBASSY NOTES THAT DE VERGOTTINI DID NOT TELL US OF LAVIN'S POSSIBLY SIGNIFICANT PHRASE ABOUT THE FAMILY'S FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT WHEN WE TALKED TO HIM DEC. 24 (SANTIAGO 12086). HIS PRIMARY CONCERN SEEMS TO BE TO GET RID OF THE FAMILY, AND HE APPEARS TO USE EVERY OPPORTUNITY TO ENGAGE THE USG IN THAT ENDEAVOR. WE SHOULD BE WARY OF INITIATIVES RE GONZALEZ WHICH ORIGINATE IN THE ITALIAN EMBASSY HERE.
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